

MIXOLOGY



Written by Bill Burke



A Flock of Toddies

THIS COMFORTING COCKTAIL IS PERFECT FOR CHILLY WINTER

Chances are, it's snowing. After all, this is Vermont, it is winter, and we wouldn't have it any other way. It's during these earliest months of the year that the Green Mountain State finds itself under a blanket of the fluffy (or slushy or icy) white stuff, creating an often breathtaking, picturesque landscape.

Though it's certainly scenic and beautiful to the point of instilling envy in much of the rest of the country, it does mean making plans to keep warm. Hats and mittens work fine, but we've got a few more creative suggestions.

Hot Toddies, the time-tested, venerable cocktail to which many ascribe healing abilities, will get the job done. It is the quintessential cold weather cocktail, combining comforting warmth and the welcome flavors of whiskey, spices and a touch of sweetness.

According to cocktail historians, the Hot Toddy's first warm spark can be traced back to 18th century northern England and Scottish pubs, where barmen would add some hot water to their Scotch to warm up after a cold day outdoors.

Simple to mix and comforting to hold and sip, the traditional hot toddy is a warming, straightforward drink for beginners to craft.

Hot Toddy

courtesy epicurious.com

- 1 ounce bourbon
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup boiling water

Pour the bourbon, honey and lemon juice into a six-ounce mug. Top off with hot water and stir until honey is dissolved.



TALK *the* TALK

The word “toddy” comes from the toddy drink in India, produced by fermenting palm tree sap. Its earliest known use can be traced to 1786, when it was meant to define “a

beverage made of alcoholic liquor with hot water, sugar, and spices.”

However, a few other

sources credit the Irish physician Robert Bentley Todd for his prescription of a hot drink of brandy, canella (white cinnamon), sugar syrup and water.

toddy noun

tod·dy | \ 'tā-dē \

plural **toddies**

Definition of toddy

- 1** : a usually hot drink consisting of liquor, water, sugar, and spices
- 2** : the fresh or fermented sap of various chiefly Asian palms

Of course, the addition of Vermont-made maple syrup only makes things better — including adding it into a Hot Toddy.

Vermont Maple Hot Toddy

courtesy esquire.com

- 2 ounces Sapling Maple Liqueur
- 1 cinnamon stick
- ¼ ounce Vermont maple syrup
- 1 ounce lemon juice
- 1 lemon wedge
- 5-6 cloves
- Hot water



Take the lemon wedge, stud it with 5-6 cloves, and hang it on the outside of the glass. Put one whole cinnamon stick into a 12-ounce mug, add the Sapling Maple Liqueur, the maple syrup and the lemon juice. Fill to the top with hot water and stir.

The drink can also benefit from the addition of cloves and cinnamon, and that's where the flexibility of this seasonal favorite comes in. The most basic form lends itself perfectly to alterations and creativity. Take, for example, the Queen Bee Hot Toddy, which adds a little honey and caramel sweetness to the proceedings.

Queen Bee Hot Toddy

courtesy seattlerefined.com

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|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 2 ounces Fireball
Cinnamon Whiskey | 1 tablespoon honey |
| ½ lemon | 8 ounces boiling water |
| | Caramel candies |

Melt some caramel candies in a shallow bowl or dish and dip the rim of a mug into the plate of melted caramel. Squeeze the juice of the ½ lemon into the mug. Add the Fireball, hot water, honey and stir.



DRIVE HAMMERED GET NAILED



◀ Spiced Apple Hot Toddy

Part of the Toddy's allure is that it's so flexible. Introduce a single new ingredient and the cocktail takes on a completely different character. Among the more successful iterations are those that make the most of our regional offerings.

Spiced Apple Hot Toddy *serves 6*

courtesy townandcountrymag.com

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|--------------------------------|---|
| 1 cup, 2 tablespoons bourbon | 2 tablespoons whole cloves |
| 2¼ cups apple cider | 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed
lemon juice |
| 3 tablespoons light, raw honey | Apple slices, to garnish |
| 4 cinnamon sticks | |

In a small saucepan, combine the apple cider, honey, cinnamon sticks and cloves. Bring to a boil, remove from the heat and steep, covered, for 15 minutes. Strain out the solids and then stir in the bourbon and lemon juice. Divide among six mugs, garnish with an apple slice and cinnamon stick.

Always drink in moderation.



MIXOLOGY: A FLOCK OF TODDIES

The Hot Toddy's slightly less steamy sibling, the Cold Toddy (made with rye whiskey, oranges, lemons, cinnamon sticks, ginger, Earl Grey tea, cloves, honey and orange or regular bitters — served with ice and stirred until it's cold) can impart many of the same flavors, but forgoing the boiling water.

Another version that strays slightly from the traditional recipe is Grog, which is essentially a hot toddy made with rum. Modern versions of Grog are made with hot or boiling water, and include lemon or lime juice, cinnamon or honey. An alternate version is Pirate Grog, which is served over ice in a rocks glass.

Hot Grog

diffordsguide.com

- 1 ounce dark or navy rum
- 1 ounce lime juice
- 3 barspoons raw honey
- 4 ounces boiling water

Add rum, lime juice and honey to a toddy glass. Add boiling water and stir with barspoon until honey dissolves. Garnish with a lemon wheel and cinnamon stick.



A FIX FOR WHAT AILS YOU

While you're unlikely to get a prescription for a Hot Toddy if you're feeling under the weather, there is some good news: This cocktail has a story and mythology connected to it that's strictly over-the-counter.

For generations, it's been suggested that the steamy concoction can actually help fight the common cold. The question, then, persists — is a Hot Toddy good for a cold? We're not going to suggest it carries medicinal qualities (especially because there is no cure for the common cold), but there are those that will argue that the hot water will relieve nasal congestion, the honey will soothe a sore throat and suppress coughing, and the vitamin C in the lemon juice can help reduce phlegm. And there may be a little science behind it. According to vinepair.com, whiskey can be a decongestant. The alcohol dilates blood vessels, making it easier for mucus membranes to deal with infection. Add a little herbal tea, and you could find yourself nodding off for some much-needed (and beneficial) shut-eye.

Here's a Hot Toddy recipe that adds a little of that herbal flavor.

The Ideal Hot Toddy

courtesy vinepair.com

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|--------------------|---------------|
| 8 ounces hot water | 1 tablespoon |
| 1 bag herbal tea | honey |
| 1 ounce bourbon | 1 lemon wedge |

Pour hot water in a mug and steep the tea for 2-3 minutes. Remove the tea bag and add honey, stirring to dissolve. Pour in the whiskey, add a squeeze of lemon juice, stir and sip.



That said, consume responsibly. Alcohol can interact with cold and flu medication, so be sure to exercise caution. Medicalnewstoday.com summarizes the theory this way:

"Although there are no cures for the common cold, people can treat some of the symptoms. A hot toddy contains several ingredients that may be able to reduce cold symptoms, such as lemon, honey, and hot water. Adding spices, such as ginger, to a hot toddy may also have benefits. There is, however, no evidence to suggest that alcohol can help with the symptoms."